

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 156

By McNally

A RESOLUTION to honor Elaine Irwin Meyer upon her retirement as president of the Museum of Appalachia.

WHEREAS, it is our privilege to recognize those community leaders whose stewardship of Tennessee history and commitment to excellence have contributed to the thriving cultural landscape of this State; and

WHEREAS, one such individual is Elaine Irwin Meyer, president of the Museum of Appalachia, who is taking her much-deserved retirement this year, bringing to a close a profound career of selfless service and devotion to telling the story of Appalachia and its people; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Meyer's father, John Rice Irwin, founded the Museum of Appalachia in 1969; located on sixty-eight acres just outside the Anderson County community of Clinton, the nonprofit, Smithsonian affiliate museum is a bastion of living history that gives voice to the people of Southern Appalachia through the artifacts and stories they have left behind; and

WHEREAS, visitors to the property happen upon the portrayal of an authentic mountain farm and pioneer village, with approximately three dozen historic log structures, several exhibit buildings filled with thousands of authentic Appalachian artifacts, and free-range animals surrounded by split-rail fences; and

WHEREAS, the Museum of Appalachia hosts several events each year, including a sheep shearing day in April, a barn dance in May, an Independence Day Anvil Shoot in July, an antique show in September, a Halloween event in October, Fall Heritage Days in November, and a Candlelight Christmas in December; and

WHEREAS, the museum celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2019; three years later, in 2022, its beloved founder passed away; and

WHEREAS, since Mr. Irwin's passing, his family has ably carried on his legacy and museum operations—in addition to Elaine Meyer serving as museum president, she also serves as executive director of the museum board; her son, John Meyer, has served as a full-time employee, farm liaison, and public event planner; and her daughter, Lindsey Meyer Gallaher, has served as board secretary; and

WHEREAS, the Museum of Appalachia is a cultural touchstone and treasure of both East Tennessee and the Appalachian region; the tireless work of Elaine Meyer has ensured not only the health of the organization, but its continued operation, much to the delight and edification of those in Appalachia and beyond; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Meyer has devoted much of her life to the Museum of Appalachia, often working five and six days a week to oversee operations; her leadership and work ethic have been invaluable to the museum and thus the preservation of the important history of the region; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Elaine Irwin Meyer as she takes her leave as president of the Museum of Appalachia, commending her commitment to the important institution built by her father and extending our best wishes for every continued success in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.